

# Keystone Harbor Study Citizen Advisory Group Process & Materials

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 **EnviroIssues**

## Purpose

Washington State Ferries (WSF) formed the Keystone Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) to help guide the Keystone Harbor Study in accordance with Washington State Legislature ESHB 2474, Chapter 229, Laws of 2004, Section 304. As defined by the bill, the group was comprised of one tug pilot, one ferry pilot, and two frequent users of the route. A WSDOT designee also attended all meetings. The group was officially selected at the April 2004 meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission. The first CAG meeting was on June 7, 2004, and the group subsequently convened on five additional occasions between that time and December 2004. The CAG's participation was integral to the Keystone Harbor Study; each member gave input on the breadth of technical analysis and harbor/vessel scenarios.

## Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) Formation

The Keystone CAG was formed shortly after EHSB 2474 passed. Applicants for the group were considered and screened from the following sources:

- Identification of route “frequent users” from Keystone-Port Townsend Terminal Improvement Project Public Scoping Comments
- Requests made to WSF
- Recommendations from Senator Mary Margaret Haugen

Preliminary phone calls were made to ten candidates to assess their interest in being on the panel. To bring a range of ideas and backgrounds to the table, WSF sought one user from the Keystone side of the route, and one from the Port Townsend side. Tug and ferry pilots were recommended by maritime professionals at WSF.

Members of the CAG were announced at the April meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission.\* They are:

- **Captain Tim McGuire**, WSF captain on Keystone-Port Townsend route
- **Captain Clark Jennison**, tug boat captain based in Port Townsend
- **Mayor Nancy Conard**, user of Keystone-Port Townsend route, Mayor of Coupeville
- **Forest Shomer**, user of Keystone-Port Townsend route, resident of Port Townsend

Paula Hammond, WSDOT Chief of Staff, was designated by Washington State Secretary of Transportation Doug MacDonald to sit in on CAG meetings and assist the process.

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\* As the study progressed, Captain Jennison experienced schedule difficulties and an alternate tug pilot, T.J. Brennan, was added to the CAG.

All CAG members were formally interviewed and briefed on the CAG process. The purpose of these interviews was to:

- Provide a brief explanation of the project history and legislative direction for the CAG.
- Understand the backgrounds of group members.
- Identify members' areas of concern.
- Assess group members' expectations regarding both process and substance of the CAG process and the harbor study.
- Introduce the facilitator and begin to develop a relationship between the facilitator and group members.
- Factor knowledge gained from interviews into the planning process for the advisory group approach.

CAG members were asked a series of questions regarding their familiarity with the project and expectations of the process. At the beginning of this process, CAG members expected:

- A compromised solution will result
- Identification of critical questions and decisions
- Personal increase in skill set as an active community member
- The ferry dock will be safer for operations

When asked about WSF's expectations, CAG members surmised that WSF:

- Needs/wants a fleet of interchangeable vessels
- Desires a safe location for the Keystone Terminal
- Wants consensus

When asked about the State Legislators' expectations, CAG members surmised that the State Legislature expected:

- An efficient operation by WSF; cost savings
- An outcome that meets the district's desires
- Public consensus regarding the important issues
- To better understand user groups and travel patterns
- The Keystone Terminal to be left in its present location

## **CAG Meeting Schedule**

WSF sponsored six meetings to inform and gather input from the CAG. All meetings were open to the public and offered 15-minute comment periods during which attendees could offer comment to the CAG. All meetings were approximately three hours in length with times adjusted to meet the Keystone-Port Townsend route schedule. This allowed members of the public to attend from their respective "side" of the route.

Date/Time	Location	Major Topics Addressed
June 7, 2004 5:30 – 8:45 p.m.	Camp Casey Conference Center, Auditorium B 1276 Engle Road Coupeville, WA	CAG Scope; Expectations; Process Overview; Keystone-Port Townsend Terminal Improvement Project History
June 24, 2004 5:30 – 8:45 p.m.	Camp Casey Conference Center, Auditorium B 1276 Engle Road Coupeville, WA	Proposed Technical Studies; Study Schedule; Final Report Contents
August 26, 2004 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.	Coupeville Rec Hall 901 NW Alexander St. Coupeville, WA	Harbor Options; Vessel Options and Regulations; Harbor/Vessel Combinations; Site-Specific Costs; Safety and Current Route Operations
September 30, 2004 5:45 – 8:45 p.m.	Coupeville Rec Hall 901 NW Alexander St. Coupeville, WA	Harbor/Vessel Scenarios; Harbor Modeling; Vessel Search; Environmental Analysis; Ridership Analysis; Throughput Analysis; Costs and Impacts
October 13, 2004 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Pope Marine Building Corner Water & Madison Streets Port Townsend, WA	Traffic Study Results; Safety Analysis; Indirect System Costs; Harbor/Vessel Scenario Narrowing; Final Report
December 7, 2004 6:00 – 8:45 p.m.	Camp Casey Conference Center, Auditorium B 1276 Engle Road Coupeville, WA	Traffic Analysis Update; New Harbor Option; Harbor Model Analysis Results; WSF System Vessel Planning; Cost Analysis Results; Next Steps and Harbor/Vessel Scenario Narrowing; CAG Letter in Final Report

All CAG meetings were advertised to the public by the following methods:

- Email notification sent to project list serve
- Email notification sent to Ferry Advisory Committee Chairpersons
- Email notification sent via WSF's "Ferry Alert" program for the Keystone-Port Townsend route
- Press release notifying the following local newspapers:
  - *Whidbey News-Times*
  - *Port Townsend/Jefferson County Leader*
  - *Peninsula Daily News*

- Project website (<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/projects/keystoneharbor>.)
- Press release posted on WSF homepage ([www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries))
- Project newsletter sent to project mailing list and to carrier routes in the 98239 zip code (Coupeville, WA)

A total of 97 people attended all CAG meetings and more than 50 public comments were received over the course of the six-month period.

## **CAG Activities**

Over the course of six months, CAG members offered their expectations, questions, and opinions of Keystone technical analyses and harbor/vessel scenarios. A neutral facilitator helped keep topics focused and the process moving forward at all meetings. The CAG and WSF together created mutually agreed-upon goals and responsibilities for the process. The CAG's goals included:

- Agreed upon scope of study
- Agreed upon topics and organization of report
- Technical report will be developed in consultation with CAG
- Written and/or verbal participation by CAG in the presentation to the Legislative Transportation Committee at conclusion of Study
- Reports to be understandable by all (CAG, agencies, and public)
- Give CAG members sufficient time to review data ahead of meetings
- Take enough time to get the job done
- Outcome of studies contributes to safer operations

In addition, roles and responsibilities for all parties in the CAG process were outlined. CAG roles and responsibilities included:

- Guide the study
- Listen and learn
- Provide input
- Keep abreast of technical analyses
- Identify issues technical team should incorporate or discuss
- Ask questions
- Help provide a solid foundation in order to approach path forward
- CAG community visibility
- Listen to and consider public comment

WSF's roles and responsibilities included:

- Conduct the required studies
- Provide information to the CAG in an understandable fashion
- Listen to the CAG
- Solicit feedback
- Listen to and consider public comment

The WSDOT designee was expected to act as a liaison between WSDOT Headquarters and WSF during the entire process.

The CAG posed study questions to WSF at the outset of the harbor study. These study questions covered traffic, the environment, and vessel types that should be considered on the route. All were incorporated into the harbor analysis. Some of these study questions had been anticipated by WSF; others, such as those related to safety, were inspired by the CAG and became a focus area of the study. In addition, WSF studied technical information for a broad range of areas including traffic, environmental impacts, ridership, costs and benefits, and vessel and harbor scenarios. All options were studied for the period from 2005-2030. Cost estimates were prepared through 2041.

The general format of all meetings allowed WSF to present information to the CAG, and subsequently allowed the CAG to ask questions of WSF staff and technical consultants. CAG members regularly posed questions and asked for refinements in data, pushing WSF to redefine and add to the analysis. WSF re-presented traffic data in easy-to-understand formats, refined cost numbers of all harbor/vessel scenarios, and added vessel options to the analysis based upon CAG and public input. In addition, the CAG was taken on a guided tour in the wheelhouse of a Steel Electric vessel from Port Townsend to Keystone to explain the difficult harbor entrance and terminal approach *in situ*.

WSF initially developed 30 potential harbor/vessel scenarios. These scenarios were based on five vessel options, and six harbor configuration options. The scenarios were organized in a matrix tool in all materials provided to the CAG. Two scenarios were eliminated immediately because they were technically infeasible. WSF initially studied traffic, environment, ridership, safety, site-specific costs and impacts on 28 scenarios. Five more scenarios were added to the consideration when an additional harbor scenario (Existing Slip with Jetty East) was developed to incorporate findings from preliminary modeling results.

The following matrix shows all harbor/vessel scenarios.

VESSEL OPTIONS	HARBOR OPTIONS						
	1. Existing Terminal with Expanded Holding Area	2. Existing Slip with Jetty Extension	3. Harbor Mouth Slip East State Park Terminal	4. In Harbor Slip-State Park Terminal	5. West State Park Slip and Terminal	6. Existing Slip with Line Dolphins	7. Existing Slip with Jetty East
Retrofit Steel Electrics to Current Standards (59 cars)	SE-1	SE-2	SE-3	SE-4	SE-5	SE-6	SE-7
New/ Existing Issaquah 130 Class (133 cars)		130-2	130-3	130-4	130-5	130-6	130-7
Issaquah 100 Class - (87/90 cars)		100-2	100-3	100-4	100-5	100-6	100-7
"Keystone Special" (65 cars)	KS-1	KS-2	KS-3	KS-4	KS-5	KS-6	KS-7
New Vessel (Alternative 1 and Alternative 2)	NP-1	NP-2	NP-3	NP-4	NP-5	NP-6	NP-7

Russ East, WSF Terminal Engineering Director, guided the CAG through a series of narrowing exercises. WSF, in consultation with the CAG, eliminated 16 scenarios from further consideration at the October 13, 2004 CAG meeting. Harbor model results and cost data, as well as further analysis of other study areas, allowed the remaining 17 to be narrowed down to four at the final CAG meeting on December 7, 2004. The Keystone CAG process culminated with the members agreeing with WSF's proposal to carry four scenarios forward for further study.